

THE MODE OF DISCHARGING WORKMEN.

A CASE was heard at the County Court, Clerkenwell, on the 15th instant (Tuffs against Mansfield), a few remarks on which may not be uninteresting to a great portion of the readers and subscribers to your journal. The plaintiff in this case sued for the sum of 5s., the amount of a day's labour which he lost on defendant's account: the facts are as follow:—The plaintiff, who had been in the employ of the defendant some months previously to Saturday, the 22nd of September, was, on that day, ordered to take his tools from the job he was then at, to the yard of the defendant, which he did accordingly, and received the amount of wages due to him by the defendant. Nothing was said to the plaintiff about being discharged: of course the plaintiff went to defendant's premises on the following Monday morning, with the expectation of being sent to another job, which is usually the case when a man is ordered to the yard with his tools, but on this occasion the plaintiff was informed that his services were no longer required.

Now, Sir, as the plaintiff had refused an engagement with another builder on the previous Saturday night in consequence of being still in the employ of defendant, I think it is quite reasonable that he should be paid for his loss of time.

After having heard the case, his Honour severely reprimanded the defendant on the injustice and impropriety of discharging men in that way, to which the defendant replied that it was the usual way of discharging men, and that ordering a man to bring his tools to the yard was equivalent to his discharge. Mr. Boresley, a carpenter and builder in a small way, was then called by the defendant, who made the same statement as defendant, adding that it was the plan that all builders adopted in discharging their men. His Honour then said that the plaintiff's experience ought to have told him that it was the general way of discharging men, and he should therefore decide for the defendant.

I shall leave it to your readers to judge for themselves, whether it is a just way of discharging a man, or whether such a plan would be adopted by any respectable builder in London; but as it has become very prevalent with the small builders of London, regardless of the interests of their men, to treat them with the utmost indifference, and I think it is high time that something was done, so that there may be something like an understanding between master and man, in order that when he was discharged, he might be informed of it on the same night, so that, if he was offered another job, he might accept it. I rely for the insertion of this on your known impartiality in the advocacy of justice, as well for the operative as the master.

R. S. TUFFS.

ARCHITECTS' REMUNERATION.

WINDSOR CASTLE.

A CONNECTION of the late Sir Jeffrey Wyattville, with reference to a remark in our leading article of September 29th (page 457, ante), that "Sir Jeffrey Wyattville received 5 per cent. on the amount expended at Windsor Castle, and was also paid for measuring the works," says that the statement is not correct. "At the commencement of the works, and with the sanction of the authorities, the late Mr. West was appointed to measure them, and they were all measured by him and his successor, Mr. William Corderoy, whose bills were made out and delivered quarterly in their own names, and paid by the department, like all other charges, to the individuals whose names they bore." The writer further says, that "the remuneration for Windsor Castle was, as for the Houses of Parliament, settled by agreement at the beginning of the works, and that 5 per cent. was to be paid in lieu of the usual per centage paid to the architects employed by Government, and travelling expenses, which the architects were entitled to, and were always paid for, at certain rates, but which were not to be charged in this instance according to the agreement entered into. It would not be too much to state that the expenses compromised for under the head of travelling expenses for himself and his clerks,

amounted in the first year of the works at Windsor Castle to 2 per cent., and throughout the whole of them formed a very considerable item."

Admitting it to be correct that Sir Jeffrey was not himself paid for measuring the works, this will not interfere with the only inference we wished drawn from the statement, namely, that the cost of measuring and making out the works was not included in the 5 per cent. commission. In Mr. Noble's volume, on "Professional Practice," we find this passage (p. 32):—

"In reference to measuring, it does not seem that at an early date in professional practice, architects ever claimed remuneration for that difficult duty; but in 1794, and at recent periods, variations have and still do occur in the profession, respecting that important business. This is borne out by an inspection of the report of the select committee of the House of Commons in 1828, in which Sir Jeffrey Wyattville's evidence shows, that in his very extensive and long practice, he always received 5 per cent. commission on the expenditure, as well as the expense of measuring; and was also paid for his journeys and wages to the clerk of works."

SANITARY MEASURES AND THE WINDOW TAX.

AMONG the sanitary measures suggested for the improvement of dwellings, it is singular, that the effect of the window tax upon the question of ventilation has of late been forgotten, or else shirked, under the pressure of the revenue deficiency. It is, however, of so great importance that, having formerly been discussed in your columns, I trust you will again lend your aid to bring the subject before the public, and invoke the Board of Health to take up the matter, as one peculiarly connected with their inquiries.

There has always been an outcry against the tax from its first imposition; and, when increased by the necessities of the war, it excited the savage epigram—

"God gave us light, and saw that it was good;
But Pitt denied it—d—his blood."

It has, however, never been alleviated, but the time seems now to have arrived when its influence upon the health of millions demands that it be reconsidered.

As an architect called upon to plan residences for all classes, I can, in common with the profession, speak decidedly upon its injurious tendency. In a residence for a nobleman I have blocked up lights in passages and corridors, to avoid excess of taxation; in houses of the middle class I have deprived staircases and attics of their due modicum of light and air; in the dwellings for the poorer classes I have stinted rooms to small single windows; and recently, in the case of parsonage houses, the economic incumbent has blocked out the light and air of the water-closets, to save the increased number of taxable lights. These are positive evils, which no Legislature, especially one which has proclaimed the importance of securing the health of a civilized community, ought any longer to allow to exist.

It is, perhaps, vain to hope for a total abolition of the tax; but if our legislature wish to show that they are earnest in promoting the health of towns, an extensive exemption of windows subject to the duty should at once be made. This exemption should extend to all windows on the underground stories of houses, where ample light and air are of vital importance: it should extend to all water-closets and lights used for ventilation, and even to staircases and passages, which are in a great measure the reservoirs of air in a house. The absurd restriction respecting the size of windows should be also removed, as it tends greatly to impede the arrangement and effect of a design, while it affects very materially the light and air of the single windows in the poorer dwellings.

I could go further into detail, and show that while a great impetus has been given to the glass trade by the removal of the duties on its manufacture the public cannot enjoy half the benefits which this removal confers, so long as the restriction upon the number and size of windows exists; but I trust these few observations will excite attention in those quarters

where the question ought to be taken up, as a matter which the recent sanitary investigations show has a great influence on the health and well being of society.
T. L.

NOTES IN THE PROVINCES.

HOUSE-VENTILATING apparatus, we hear, is getting extensively into use in Lincoln. In some cases the vitiated air is taken off by communication with the chimney; and perforated glass has been introduced into windows for the admission of fresh air.—The Manningtree Mechanics' Institution are about to erect a building, with lecture-room 40 feet by 24, and reading-room 20 feet by 14. It is to be in the Elizabethan style, from a design furnished by Mr. Samuel Teulon, to be carried out by Mr. Samuel Simpson, builder.—The sewage excavations at Colchester are in active progress: coins and other relics are turning up.—A writer in the *Bury Post*, while advocating cheap gas for that town, gives the following estimates of cost of gas-works: "There are," he remarks, "no works, I believe, in the counties of either Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex, or Cambridgeshire, of fifteen years' standing, with the same extent of main and public lights, so cheap as these [for Bury], as will appear by the cost of—

Ipswich works	£26,000
Colchester, exclusive of lamp-posts ..	22,000
Cambridge, about	40,000
Norwich	50,000
Bury, say	10,500

Nor am I aware," he adds, "of any works in England, of the same standing and extent, cheaper than the Bury works."—Halsted, too long unlighted, is to be provided with gas lamps, and lighted by voluntary contribution.

—According to authorized certificate, the quantity of gas consumed in Worcester from June, 1848, to June, 1849, was 17,668,600 feet.—The Edinburgh Council Committee, to whom the petition of the city fleshers for a new slaughter-house was referred, have reported favourably on it, and propose that the city provide 20,000*l.* as the requisite capital, and apply to Parliament for three acres of ground in a proper situation. The fleshers are to pay 100*l.* expenses if the application fail. The new corn market will be finished in a few weeks. The hall is 152 feet long by 92 broad—the largest in the City. Extensive operations are in progress for the formation of a great reservoir on the Castle-hill for the better supply of water to the citizens. The whole of the water company's present buildings there, with adjoining properties, are in course of demolition, and the new reservoir will be made capable of holding about a million and a half of gallons, in place of forty to fifty thousand only, as the old one did. The works are under the immediate charge of the company's engineer, Mr. Leslie, with the advice of Mr. Adie and Mr. Rendall. The designs for the building have been furnished by the company's architect, Mr. Clarke.—Measures are also in progress for the better supply of Glasgow with water, by an extension of the Gorbals Gravitation Water-works.

DRURY-LANE THEATRE.—Mr. Frederick Gye has been waving his wand again, harlequin like, and lo! the stage of Drury-lane, and the dirty receptacles of scenery and lumber at the back, glow in the purity of a brilliant white, powdered with sprouting roses in a golden trellage, for the purposes of Jullien, the popularizer of good music. It is quite startling to see what can be done in a week with an unlimited quantity of glazed calico, gold banding, artificial flowers, and Mr. Gye's aptness and good taste. Of the banding there is not less, we calculated, than three miles in length! Considerable improvement has been effected behind, by the removal of two transverse walls, by which means the whole space is thrown into one apartment. The music-loving portion of the English public have much to thank M. Jullien for.

INSTITUTE OF BRITISH ARCHITECTS.—The first ordinary meeting of the session will be held on Monday evening next, when will be read, "Remarks on the earlier and later Gothic Architecture of Germany," by the Rev. Dr. Whewell.